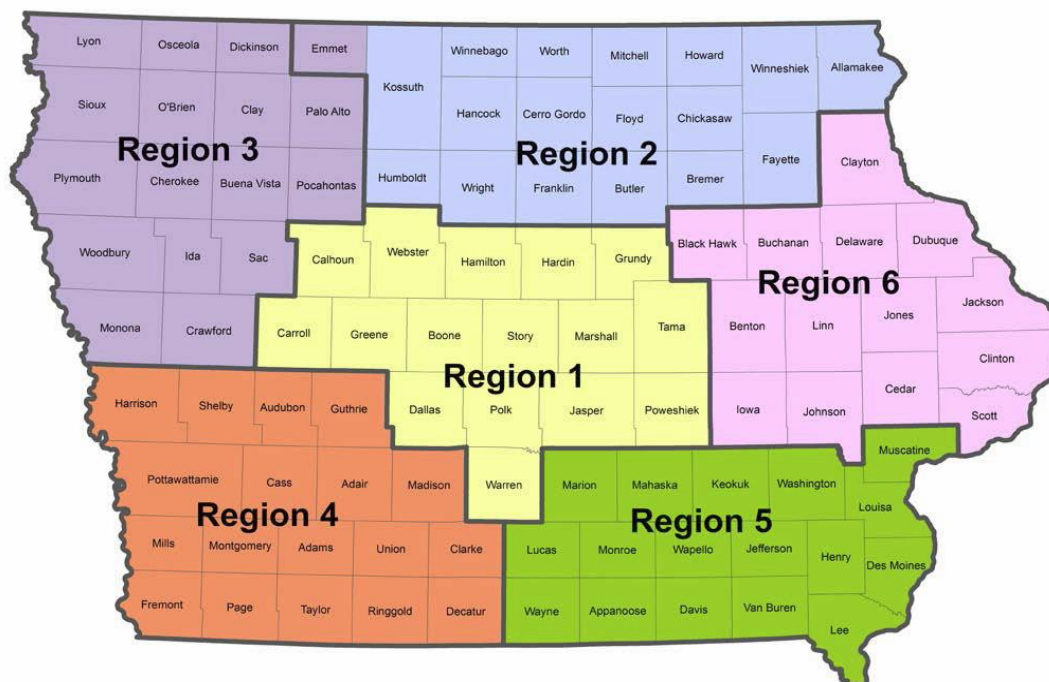


# Strategies for Implementing Health Improvement Plans

## *Highlights from the CHNA & HIP 2015 Progress Reports*



In 2015, local public health agencies submitted progress reports on their implementation efforts. Again this year, agencies are using solid, evidence-based strategies to improve their community's health status and also are trying out innovative approaches to address their priority needs. In general, these themes run through many of the reports:

- Community vegetable gardens are springing up across the state with produce being harvested for such nutrition activities as school lunch programs and food banks.
- Websites, Facebook, and other social media have become standard ways of spreading health messages.
- Walkers are paying attention to the walkability and handicap accessibility of sidewalks and trails and are taking I-Walk community assessments to elected officials for improvements.
- Besides successful provider recruitment efforts, counties also have found innovative ways of responding to mental health needs. Examples include telemed services; mental

health first-aid training for police officers, teachers, and primary care providers; and postings of updated mental health resource information.

- Counties that have made reducing teenage births a priority have seen tangible results of their efforts.
- Policy changes are accompanied by a decline in youth alcohol and tobacco use.
- Children's immunization rates have increased as a result of community forums, clinics, and letters/phone calls to parents.
- Local health agencies are paying attention to the needs of diverse population groups in their communities.

What follows is a selective list of **one initiative** from each county's health improvement progress report. The entire report is posted on the CHNA & HIP website. Local public health agencies welcome inquiries about details of the initiative which is part of a more comprehensive effort to address the county's needs.

<b>Adair</b>	A health coach, partially funded by a <b>Mercy Accountable Care Organization</b> grant, counsels residents with chronic conditions.
<b>Adams</b>	To encourage the 45-75 year-old age group to pay attention to hypertension, automatic blood pressure cuffs are easily accessed in the agency lobby as well as in the wellness center.
<b>Allamakee</b>	Dental offices have received education and training for tobacco cessation and taking blood pressure.
<b>Appanoose</b>	During two months of the <b>Step into Spring</b> event, teams of 10 adults and students logged in 1,000,000 minutes of activity.
<b>Audubon</b>	<b>Fired Up for Summer Fun</b> is a joint effort of several groups to provide a noon meal and physical activity twice a week for children.
<b>Benton</b>	Seven communities have adopted a <b>social host ordinance</b> , a policy change that has been promoted through newspaper advertisements and two billboards.
<b>Black Hawk</b>	A complete assessment process tailored early interventions for expectant mothers and helped account for a decline in low birthweight babies. In 2008-2011, the percentage was 8-8.6%. In 2012-2013, the percentage dropped to 6.1%.
<b>Boone</b>	Results of I-Walk project assessments were taken to the city engineer and city council for renovating hazardous areas.
<b>Bremer</b>	In response to a community survey identifying poor parenting skills as a priority, home visits have increased, information on the <b>Period of Purple Crying</b> was promoted at the Family Fun Fair, and the Family NEST program provided resources to families with basic needs.

<b>Buchanan</b>	Momentum for increased walkability in the city of Independence has led to improving sidewalks, finishing two trails, and planning even more trails.
<b>Buena Vista</b>	As a result of I-Walk data, Storm Lake is making intersections more handicap accessible and sidewalks more conducive for walking.
<b>Butler</b>	A follow-up survey of residents will assess their preparedness for disasters and the impact of promotion activities at such events as Kid Fest and the county fair.
<b>Calhoun</b>	The strong relationship between the local health agency and Stewart Community Hospital is evidenced by coordinated training and classes along with work on a joint CHNA & HIP.
<b>Carroll</b>	At a volunteer day, students volunteer to help seniors with such chores as raking leaves and snow removal.
<b>Cass</b>	The Food Policy Council is working with the Chamber of Commerce and local farmers to expand <b>Produce in the Park</b> every Thursday night during the summer with many different events.
<b>Cedar</b>	Information on emergency preparedness is distributed through the county treasurer's tax mailings.
<b>Cerro Gordo</b>	A newly hired dietitian is holding cooking demonstrations and seminars at the senior center, Food Bank, schools, and worksites. One-on-one counseling for the general public and specific population groups also is being considered.
<b>Cherokee</b>	<b>Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Drug Affected, Reality Works Infant Manikins</b> continue to be an effective tool to reduce prenatal use of drugs and alcohol. The manikins are widely distributed to area partners.
<b>Chickasaw</b>	The number of adults and children engaged in biking, hiking on trails, walking, running, and participating in 5Ks is evidence of increased attention to physical activity.
<b>Clarke</b>	Two staff members who are bilingual provide resources and information to families on child abuse and other issues.
<b>Clay</b>	Instead of receiving infant formulas, new mothers receive gift bags from the hospital, a collaborating partner on breastfeeding. At the county fair, the hospital provides three breastfeeding areas and cares for the infants while the mothers are enjoying the fair.
<b>Clayton</b>	Efforts to reduce young people's alcohol and tobacco use have been successful. According to the <b>Iowa Youth Survey</b> , alcohol use among students in all grades has dropped from 20% in 2010 to 12% in 2014; tobacco use, from 12% to 7%.

Clinton	To reduce prescription drug abuse, an intensive <b>Prescription Drug Monitoring Program</b> has been initiated, <b>RX lockers</b> have been purchased for at-risk families, and drop boxes for old drugs are available.
Crawford	A <b>literacy coalition</b> has been established to deal not only with health literacy, but also with issues related to the county's diverse population needs.
Dallas	A <b>Health Navigation</b> program, funded through United Way and the Iowa Primary Care Association, connects primary care with other providers and has shown quantifiable results.
Davis	The public health agency is working with the hospital on a transitional care program to reduce hospital readmissions through phone calls, disease education, and home visits following hospital discharge.
Decatur	Residents are using the public trolley in Leon for visits to their medical appointments. Scheduled pick-ups are available for trips to Osceola and Des Moines.
Delaware	An all-out community effort had an impact on young people's alcohol use. The 2014 <b>Iowa Youth Survey</b> showed that binge drinking among 11 <sup>th</sup> graders has dropped from 35% (2012) to 16%; among 8 <sup>th</sup> graders, binge drinking dropped from 5% to 3%.
Des Moines	A community-wide emergency plan that involves the access and functional needs population is being implemented. Persons with disabilities are members of the <b>Health Care Coalition</b> responsible for the plan.
Dickinson	Dietitians provide cooking classes, mark areas in the grocery store as their favorites, and offer students coupons for buying fruits and vegetables at a reduced cost.
Dubuque	To comply with air quality standards, the city of Dubuque only allows open burning with a special permit.
Emmet	A <b>Healthy Beginnings Home Visiting Program</b> includes healthy meals education and healthy food selection resources.
Fayette	All schools in the county have an active <b>Walking School Bus</b> program.
Floyd	Groups throughout the county are collaborating on a sustainable approach to family planning access.
Franklin	Grant funding was obtained to connect Rolling Prairie Trail to trails in Butler and Wright counties.
Fremont	Strategies to increase teens' social skills and make related resources easily available include a curriculum on safe dating, violence prevention, and peer mentoring.

Greene	The “Be an Askable Parent” is a year-around campaign to promote teen/parent dialogue about sexuality issues. The campaign includes distribution of a parent/teen backpack with tips, ideas, and local statistics on teen pregnancies and STDs along with a series of articles in the newspaper on teen pregnancy.
Grundy	At a <b>Grundy County Farm Crawl</b> , residents will come together and explore local foods at the farmers’ market followed by travel to three farms to walk the land and view gardens, poultry, livestock, and goats.
Guthrie	Continued outreach has resulted in a 5% increase in EMS volunteers.
Hamilton	Two new, fully trained inspectors for pools, spas, tanning and tattoo facilities, and pumper trucks have completed the required inspections.
Hancock	Preliminary outcomes of a survey of students engaged in a <b>Pick a Better Snack</b> program showed that students know why fruits and vegetables are important for their diet.
Hardin	To improve the number of fully immunized adults, the county organized 18 flu/wellness clinics for employers, civic groups, seniors, and students/teachers. Contracts with two pharmaceutical companies provide immunizations to low-income adults at minimal cost.
Harrison	To combat the high rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect cases, a <b>Darkness to Light</b> trainer trained 70 school staff and 208 others to protect an estimated 2,080 children from sexual abuse.
Henry*	
Howard	Helping Services staff visited convenience stores selling over-the-counter medications to share a <b>training tool about commonly abused medications</b> and best practices for policies and procedures. Plans are underway to visit and share the tool with pharmacies.
Humboldt	Again this year, lack of dental providers for Title 19 patients is being addressed by working with dentists in outlying counties. The problem of transportation is alleviated by a DHS program and CoCity Bus when funding is available.
Ida	A 37-member <b>Medical Reserve Corps</b> completed an exercise to test the Ida County Volunteer Reception Center.
Iowa	Joint efforts of community groups, senior centers, and churches have resulted in volunteers willing to provide transportation to medical-related services. An updated roster of volunteers is maintained.
Jackson	Multiple establishments have taken advantage of responsible beverage server trainings held in nine locations.

Jasper	to increase options, awareness, and access, a 211 website is kept updated with information about service providers concerned with substance abuse and mental health issues.
Jefferson	A certified diabetes education program offers free diabetes education classes.
Johnson	Twelve worksites received <b>Corridor Worksite Wellness Awards</b> for encouraging health nutrition and physical activity.
Jones*	
Keokuk	Enhanced enforcement by schools and law enforcement and a social host ordinance are a number of strategies leading to a 50% reduction in binge drinking among youth for the period from 2008-2014.
Kossuth	The school district's updated wellness policy eliminated physical activity as punishment, integrated physical activity into classrooms, prohibited school-based marketing of low-nutritious food and beverages, and eliminated sugar-sweetened beverages as rewards.
Lee	An <b>I-Smile Silver</b> project addresses the oral health care needs of the elderly population along with development of a dental infrastructure to serve this group of Iowans.
Linn	United Way acted as a scheduling hub for 24 organizations to connect the uninsured and others with <b>Certified Application Counselor</b> locations to enroll 9,506 residents in either the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan or an insurance policy through Healthcare.gov's marketplace exchange.
Louisa	Partnering with the Community Health Center on translation services has helped to solve the problem of access to services for non-English speaking residents.
Lucas	ISU Extension Service, Lucas NEST, and the Lucas County Health Center sponsor classes on nutrition and exercise.
Lyon	Increased full immunization rates (an increase from 10% to 17%) for adolescents in a medical home can be attributed to school-based clinics along with the school nurse who makes a practice of talking to parents and students and sends out letters about immunization needs.
Madison	Work with pediatricians and reaching out to parents at Head Start and Toddlerfest have meant that 59% of two-year-olds are fully immunized compared with 38% in 2008.
Mahaska*	
Marion*	
Marshall	Since 2000, there has been a 39% reduction in teen births, an outcome of the efforts of a coalition committed to sustainable, community change.

<b>Mills</b>	Financial support from the Children's Hospital provided the CATCH curriculum to all area pre-schools and the After School Summer Care program. CATCH, an evidence-based program, reached over 500 children.
<b>Mitchell*</b>	
<b>Monona</b>	During the school year, a youth-led group meets monthly to reduce tobacco use; in 2014, 7% of students in grades 6, 8, and 11 use tobacco; 14% have never used tobacco.
<b>Monroe</b>	To address the need for improved access to mental health services, <b>a behavioral health hotline and substance abuse hotline</b> are available along with a therapist for face-to-face counseling, telemed services, and a Medicaid case management program.
<b>Montgomery</b>	An interpreter has been hired to respond to the needs of the Latino population.
<b>Muscatine</b>	Four new initiatives to support mental health services include integrating behavioral health with primary care clinics, mental health first-aid training, a task force white paper on new services and shortfalls, and establishing a <b>Children's Mental Health Consortium</b> with workgroups.
<b>O'Brien</b>	New to this year's anti-smoking efforts are <b>anti-vaping materials</b> aimed at educating school-aged children about the dangers of smokeless cigarettes.
<b>Osceola</b>	In addition to disposal drop boxes at both pharmacies for expired and unused medication, the county is investigating information on a new system of proper medication disposal.
<b>Page</b>	Efforts to increase HPV vaccinations include informational forums and letters sent to parents.
<b>Palo Alto</b>	The Immunization rate for 24-month-old children increased from 80% to 86% by changing the process of recalls. Any parent who misses a scheduled appointment receives a call.
<b>Plymouth</b>	Nursing students assisted with developing teaching and screening tests for diabetes and physical inactivity.
<b>Pocahontas</b>	Safety programs ranging from <b>farm field safety</b> to children's programs are in place. New balance and strengthen exercises to prevent falls are offered at meal sites and assisted living facilities.
<b>Polk</b>	The transit agency board adopted a blueprint for the next generation of bus, rail, and high-occupancy vehicle service in a 13-city service area. The plan is expected to increase accessible, affordable public transportation.
<b>Pottawattamie*</b>	

Poweshiek	An urgent care clinic opened and is available during the week from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM and sometime during Saturday.
Ringgold	The Southern Iowa River Water Association completed a public sewer system for four communities.
Sac	Ninety-two percent of the 36 families with 54 children participating in the STEPS program improved or maintained their nurturing skills. The program was funded by an <b>Early Childhood Iowa and Prevent Child Abuse</b> grant.
Scott	A <b>Food Rescue Partnership</b> has brought partners from many sectors together to work on the issue of food waste and access.
Shelby	The county's strides in responding to youth mental health issues are evidenced by a Myrtue Medical Center sponsorship of a community stakeholder forum, an active mental health work group, hiring two psychiatrists and an ARNP, and participation in the new regional structure for mental health services.
Sioux	Efforts to increase the duration of breast feeding include a commitment by the new hospital as a <b>Breast Feeding Friendly Workplace</b> , a peer support group, meetings with the three hospitals to discuss collaborative breast feeding promotion efforts, and recertification of two lactation consultants.
Story	A <b>Story County Quality of Life Alliance</b> brings together coalitions and organizations for health to discuss outcomes and such issues as elderly drinking problems.
Tama*	
Taylor	All medical clinics are committed to referrals to the <b>1st Five Healthy Mental Health Development Coordinator</b> for development, stress, and caregiver depression.
Union	Public health offers lead prevention education to home owners, landlords, apartment managers, and parents as a strategy for reducing the percentage of homes at high risk. Health care providers screen one-year old children for lead and perform blood lead testing, as needed.
Van Buren*	
Wapello*	
Warren	Advocacy efforts to increase physical activity are focused on educating preschool and day care providers about the importance of limiting screen time.
Washington	Following adoption of an anti-bullying policy in all three school districts, counselors have developed tools and resources to implement the strategy; school staff has guidelines



setting limits and disciplining students; students are assisting with implementation; and the school districts continue to identify training and education strategies.

<b>Wayne</b>	The county has successfully recruited two dentists who admit children covered by Medicaid. The dentists have received training in tobacco and hypertension screening.
<b>Webster</b>	<b>YouthNet</b> has developed support groups relating to drugs, bullying, and drinking; sub-committees work with partnering agencies to build support within the schools.
<b>Winnebago</b>	The <b>Heart Reach Mobile Unit</b> drew so many residents for screening heart disease and stroke that the mobile unit returned for two more days.
<b>Winneshiek</b>	A county plan for disposing of hazardous waste continues to be implemented and includes a county-wide cleanup day as well as postings of what and where some items can be recycled and radio PSAs.
<b>Woodbury</b>	One of the first actions taken by the <b>Siouxland Food Policy Group</b> was a discussion of possible policy changes in transportation systems that will increase access to food.
<b>Worth</b>	Based on the <b>Iowa Youth Survey</b> data, progress is being made in reducing alcohol and tobacco. Eleventh graders' current alcohol use has dropped from 32% in 2010 to 12% in 2014; tobacco, from 19% to 11%.
<b>Wright</b>	<b>Access to dental health services</b> is being increased by training two nurses in the WIC program in basic oral health exams and in application of dental sealants and by a Spanish interpreter working with the I-Smile coordinator to reach out to the Hispanic population and to provide translation services at dental appointments.

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\*The 2015 Progress Report is not available.